

REMARKS

Claims 1-14 are presented for consideration, with Claims 1, 8, 12 and 14 being independent.

An editorial change has been made to the specification. In addition, the abstract has been amended to more concisely set forth technical aspects of Applicant's invention.

Editorial changes have been made to selected claims. These changes include amending Claim 4 to depend solely from Claim 1. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection to Claim 4 is therefore respectfully requested.

Applicant is submitting concurrently herewith a Submission of Replacement Sheets of Drawings, with Figures 16(a), 16(b), 17 and 18 labelled as --Prior Art-- as required in paragraph 4 of the Office Action. Approval of the Replacement Sheets is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3, 5, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Endo (WO '647) in view of Nakai '844. Claim 6 stands rejected as allegedly being obvious over those citations and further in view of Uno '883. Claim 7 stands rejected as allegedly being obvious over Endo, Nakai and further in view of Ikeda '385. Claims 8, 9 and 14 stand rejected as allegedly being obvious over Endo, Nakai and further in view of Goden '136. Finally, Claims 10 and 11 stand rejected as allegedly being obvious over Endo, Nakai, Goden and further in view of Asano '557.

Without conceding to the propriety of these rejections, Applicant is submitting herewith a certified English translation of JP 2004-170510, the priority document in the subject application. The filing date of the priority application is June 8, 2004, which predates the September 28, 2004, filing date of the Nakai '844 publication. It is requested, therefore, that the Nakai publication be removed as a reference.

Without the Nakai publication, it is submitted that each of the claim rejections must fall. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103 is respectfully requested.

Thus, it is submitted that Applicant's invention as set forth in independent Claims 1, 8, 12 and 14 is patentable over the cited art. In addition, dependent Claims 2-7, 9-11 and 13 set forth additional features of Applicant's invention. Independent consideration of the dependent claims is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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